

# Keeping You Posted



Newsletter of the United Church of Christ

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## WCC Approves Grants to Counter Racism

The World Council of Churches has approved \$396 million in 1985 Programme to Combat Racism Special Fund grants.

UCC does not give to this special fund, but WCC membership includes financing PCR administrative costs. Grant recipients are required to use the funds for humanitarian activities such as legal aid or social, health and educational services.

Southern African organizations will receive \$225 million of this year's grants because of the intense racism in the area. Recipients include the African National Congress, a South African movement aiming to abolish apartheid and create a democratic government; Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, which calls for a free non-racial government; South West Africa People's Organization which opposes South Africa's military occupation of Namibia; and the South African Congress of Trade Unions, a 1955 creation devoted to gaining recognition for the country's unions.

## Hunger Fund Offering Set for Oct. 6-Nov.28

Eighty hunger projects have applied for approximately \$500,000 through the UCC's Hunger Action Fund, created by General Synod 10 in 1975. Approximately \$100,000 will be available for allocation.

The UCC Hunger Action Fund supports advocacy projects and community coalitions, assists in organizing communities, enables community development and provides educational materials.

Last year \$75,000 was allocated to 29 hunger projects in the U.S. Mainstay, hunger-related organizations such as Interfaith Action for Economic Justice, Bread for the World and IMPACT received \$57,000.

The Hunger Action Fund offering complements the One Great Hour of Sharing offering which supports world-wide aid and development work. Oct. 6 to Nov. 28 are suggested dates to promote HAF giving in local churches.

## OCWM Giving Shows New Mission Trends

Even while churches across the UCC are canvassing their members and raising pledges to support next year's budgets, a fundamental debate is quietly taking place among church leaders as to how their share of that new income should be divided.

Undergirding the debate is paragraph 159 of our Constitution and Bylaws: "A Conference consults on a regular basis with the Stewardship Council, acting on behalf of the General Synod, to reach mutual agreement upon the percentage, or the dollar amount of the undesignated gifts for Our Church's Wider Mission to be retained for its own support."

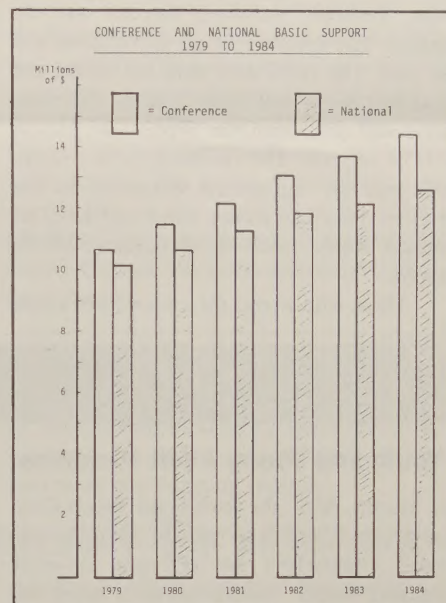
In the early days of the union, standard practice was clear: churches raised mission money and conferences acted as conduits to forward most of that money for national and international mission programs. Despite paragraph 159, there was little conversation and less consultation.

But gradually that changed.

"As the UCC has matured, the import and role of the conferences as mission providers has increased," says Scott S. Libbey, Mr. Libbey, executive vice-president of the UC Board for World Ministries, served for 14 years as Iowa Conference Minister. "And now the local church is encouraged to see itself as a mission agency," he adds.

This shift in mission attitude and programming has been reflected in a gradual shift in church funding, so that in 1977, for the first time, the combined share of conference OCWM basic support funds was larger than the national share. That shift is continuing, so that in 1984 the conference share of total OCWM basic support giving was 53.6%, the national share 46.4%.

Although this is a national trend, large variations exist among conferences, with conference basic support shares ranging from as little as 25% to as much as 85%. The differences depend upon many factors, including the total number of churches within a conference, the number of large-giving churches within that total, the amount of investment and endowment income, the cost of running the conference, and the extent of conference mission programs.



The numbers can be read a number of ways.

One is to compute the amount of money national agencies would have received over the last dozen years had the shift not occurred: nearly \$9 million. Another is to note the tremendous giving to special appeals: a record \$1.8 million to African relief during this current crisis, for example, which could go straight to work because of church structures already in place.

The most basic numbers, though, are those that show total giving steadily increasing. Last year 26 UCC conferences had an increase in *both* conference basic support *and* national basic support. Discounting inflation, then, while the national basic support percentage is steadily decreasing, actual dollar amounts are steadily climbing.

"Local church giving is up dramatically," says C. Shelby Rooks, executive vice-president of the UC Board for Homeland

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# Thankfulness: A Shared Factor of Faith

By David Y. Hirano

Nuuanu Valley is a lush tropical valley in Honolulu. The Pali Highway splits the valley and leads to the windward side of the Island. Along the Pali Highway are a number of religious institutions.

On Thanksgiving Eve about 10 of these institutions gather for a Community Thanksgiving Eve Service. At the service this year, which will be held at a United Methodist Church, there will be Buddhists, members of three UCC churches, Methodists, Unitarians, Episcopalians, Roman Catholics, Eastern Orthodox Catholics, and Jews. English, Japanese, Hebrew, Samoan, Korean will be spoken. The scriptures of all the religions will be read. The rabbi may blow his shofar, the Buddhist priest will chant a Sutra, the ministers will read from the Bible, and prayers will be offered. The members of the clergy will wear the appropriate vestments for the service. After the service there will be a reception where foods of all nations will be served.

Those who attend the service learn about

each other's religions. They learn to respect each other's traditions. Because there has been a common experience of worship, it is hard to criticize another's religion. Neither Christian nor Buddhist nor Jew will be able to say, "My religion is better than yours," or "My view of the Eternal is better than yours."

Differences are not hidden. Christ's name is lifted up at the service; Amida Buddha is referred to by the Buddhist priest; and God is mentioned by the Jew and Unitarian. In the Christian Church, Christian hymns are sung, and when the service is at the Buddhist Temple, Buddhist hymns are sung. There are differences, but there is also respect and no judgment. There is sharing of traditions, caring for one another and learning from each other. The Union Thanksgiving Service is a lesson in sharing. It is a microcosm of what could be when people find unity in their humanity and in eternal values.

For the Christian, it is an experience in which one learns more deeply about Christianity. It is as one encounters another reli-

gion, that one begins to plumb more deeply the meaning and message of Christianity. In comparing the values which each religion holds, one discovers what is universal. It is an exciting adventure. Each person who attends the Community Thanksgiving Eve Service comes away with a stronger faith.

The Thanksgiving Eve Service is like a rainbow which is seen daily in Hawaii. The bow in the sky with many colors strung together is beautiful. Each color is different from the other, but each adds to the other. So it is when we give thanks together.

There is unity in thanksgiving that can be found in all peoples. Thanksgiving can be something that brings people together even though divergent in religion, race, or language. Thanksgiving to the Eternal One, God, by whatever name the Eternal is called, is for all humanity.

*David Y. Hirano is minister of the Nuuanu Congregational Church in Honolulu, Hawaii. A past moderator of PAAM (Pacific and Asian-American Ministries), he currently serves on the UCC Executive Council. He holds the D. Min. degree from the School of Theology at Claremont and a B.D. from Andover Newton Theological School.*

## Priorities Report

### Youth and Young Adult Ministries

In Seattle, WA, the Richmond Beach Congregational Church is helping youth understand themselves by offering six-week sexuality classes. Parents attend a mock session then give written permission for their children to participate. Instructors Wayne Kemmish and Kathy Hauck field anonymously submitted questions on topics ranging from automobiles to VD. A Planned Parenthood presentation covers abortion and contraceptives. Youth enthusiasm for the program has prompted young people from outside the church to attend the classes.

### Family Life

"Parenting from Within" is the title of a regular column in the newsletter of First Community Church, Columbus, OH. In it, problems and questions on child-rearing submitted by local parents are answered by Mary Evans, the church's director of early childhood development, who says, "I always try to deal with the child inside the parent. Their work with children can only occur as they are dealing with the child within themselves." Recent columns have discussed kids' reactions to divorce, disagreements between parents and teenagers on moral issues and the frustrations of a woman who married at age 18 and now feels "trapped" with two young children.

### Spiritual Renewal

Christians who believe in Christianity but not 'Churchianity' don't understand what our faith is all about, says LaVerne Sova, pastor of St. John's UCC, Smithton, IL, affirming the need for fellowship among believers. Ms. Sova says, "The church is not the building where the terrible choir sings, and that even more terrible minister. Nor is it the beautiful gothic Cathedral with its lovely gothic windows and a budget with a lovely gothic debt. The church is rather a great fellowship of men and women down through the ages, in heaven and on earth, the saints, the martyrs, the ordinary stumbling folks like us, who have committed themselves to God, as he is made know in Jesus Christ, and try to live their lives in terms of that faith."

### Justice and Peace

Peace, like charity, begins at home, says the Scarsdale Congregational Church, NY. Steps for problem solving were discussed at the church's program on "Handling Conflict Creatively." Identification of the problem's core and other contributing factors is essential, they learned. Then, all possible solutions

and their consequences should be explored. Finally, a resolution plan should be adopted and implemented.

Camera-ready copies of the Office for Church in Society's bulletin insert on the upcoming Geneva summit are available from OCIS, 110 Maryland Ave., NE, Washington, DC 20002 with a 25 postage charge. The insert appeared in the October UCC Peace Priority.

SEND NEWS ideas and queries to KEEPING YOU POSTED, Office of Communication, UCC, 105 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016.

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# OC Plans Work with Disciples

Noting the mandate to "manifest the unity of Christ's church" contained in the UCC-Disciples of Christ partnership document, the communications offices of the two denominations made plans at a meeting this fall to carry out work together.

The two offices made specific commitments to assist each other in the areas of education, production, public relations and administration. They also agreed to explore joint efforts in public policy advocacy—not currently conducted in communications by the Disciples—and to look into common marketing activities to strengthen denominational identity.

In education, the two offices discussed joint sponsorship and staffing of workshops on computer privacy and of EVCOM training sessions designed to assist local churches in using communications media for evangelism.

The Disciples communications office agreed to help with the UCC children's television show "Spiral" and to assist in getting wider distribution for the UCC public service announcements on peace. The two staffs will exchange video pieces for one another's programs, the UCC video show "Choice and Change" and the Disciples' segment of the religious cable offering "One in the Spirit."

In public relations, the offices plan to increase use of each other's staff at the General Synod and Disciples' General Assembly,

to explore using one another's news writers for covering meetings and events nearer the other denomination's headquarters, to provide feature story information to one another and to issue joint news releases on common concerns.

In describing enormous changes in the regulatory climate and in communications technology, UCC Office of Communication director Beverly J. Chain depicted mainline church groups as being "hitchhikers in a media universe," who are "free to move about and explore" what their role in that universe will be.

She expressed eagerness to establish a working relationship in programs where UCC and Disciples interests converge "as well as to identify areas of complete difference where we may be challenged and perhaps expand both ministries by means of shared resources."

Reiterating the call in the partnership document for "expressions of common mission" and "coordinated planning and possible joint staffing," Disciples vice president for communication Bob Friedly responded that communications offices have a special responsibility in the mandate to "seek further communion." "Networking is our livelihood," he said, and "we deal with an industry that does not want to deal with us separately."

## Puerto Rican Activist Sentenced to 35 years

Long-time advocate of Puerto Rican independence Alejandrina Torres was sentenced to 35 years in prison on Oct. 4 in Federal District Court in Chicago.

Ms. Torres, 46—wife of Jose Torres, the minister of Chicago's First Congregational Church—was among three defendants convicted Aug. 5 of seditious conspiracy and weapons and explosives violations. The defendants, calling themselves freedom fighters and challenging U.S. authority over Puerto Rico, neither denied the charges nor waged an active defense. A fourth defendant was convicted of seditious conspiracy only.

The government, offering evidence gathered with video cameras and eavesdropping devices in 1983, contended that the four had planned to bomb two military facilities, arrange escapes from a federal prison and commit other crimes.

In 1984, several UCC leaders publicly protested an alleged beating and stripping of Ms. Torres in a federal correctional center in Chicago, where she had been held pending trial since 1983. She was moved to a correctional center in Tucson after her sentencing last month.

## Civil Right Restoration Act Threatened

Colleges may soon be allowed to discriminate against minorities and women with the indirect aid of taxpayer money.

In 1984 the Supreme Court decision *Grove City College v. Bell* held that a college which received federal funds could discriminate, as long as it did not discriminate in the particular program receiving aid. Now the Reagan administration plans to extend the court's interpretation to other areas.

Although the House later voted overwhelmingly to restore nondiscriminatory policy in higher education through the Civil Rights Restoration Act, the act was stopped in the Senate by a filibuster.

This year the bill, HR 700, was approved by two committees in the House, however, two controversial abortion related amendments were added.

The first amendment to the House version of the bill would overturn federal regulations which bar covered educational institutions from discriminating on the basis of pregnancy-related conditions, including abortion.

It would allow suspension of women students who choose abortion, deny them medical leave, limit their participation in athletics, deny them health insurance coverage or expel

Continued from page 1

## OCWM Giving

Ministries. "But the real question is, who is to do mission? What has evolved is mission being undertaken more broadly than just by the national church."

Central Pacific Conference Minister Don Severson concurs. "What is the mission and how does it get done are the basic questions," he says. Severson is also secretary-treasurer of the Council of Conference Ministers. "You can't talk about the shift in OCWM giving without talking about changing levels of responsibility," he adds. "This is a natural transition."

"Talking about it is crucial," says Stewardship Council executive George Otto. "In our denomination, 'covenantal decision making' is the key. This way the system is making a decision, not just a part of the system."

As part of these conversations, Executive Council has authorized a Financial Planning Consultation. This group of 15 includes representatives of the Council of Conference Ministers, conference boards of directors, Executive Council, the instrumentalities and the local church.

Free copies of The Hymnal, Eden Publishing House, 1960 printing, are available from the St. Peters Evangelical UCC, 119 S. Grove St., Kewanee, IL, 61443, 309-853-2216. Recipients must pay shipping charges.

them from school outright. The current law prohibits these acts.

The Catholic Bishops' lobby, which supports the amendment, has "linked arms with religious right wing groups who also are opposed to women's right of choice in the area of abortion," charges Faith Evans, policy advocacy associate for the UCC's Office for Church in Society.

An equally controversial amendment would include schools "affiliated" with religious organizations. This language is broader than the current exemption for church "controlled" schools and would exempt nearly a third of the colleges covered by Title IX educational regulations.

According to Mr. Evans, the Civil Rights Restoration Act is being used "as a tool for denying the right of choice to a large segment of women who attend universities and institutions with some type of religious affiliation."

OCIS and other supporters of the act, HR 700/S 431, agree that discriminating institutions should not get federal aid.

Mr. Evans urges members to contact their Congressional Representatives and urge them to support the bills with no amendments.



## PERSONNEL CHANGES

Dr. Norman W. Jackson will be the new executive director of the Council for American Indian Ministry, a 1970 UCC creation designed to develop and coordinate programs for American Indians.

Since 1978 Dr. Jackson has been executive associate to UCC president Avery D. Post. Prior to this, he was conference minister in the Kansas-Oklahoma Conference.

In his new position, Dr. Jackson will coordinate ministerial efforts of the 22 UCC Indian churches and serve as director of Native American Studies at United Theological Seminary in New Brighton, MN.

Dr. Jackson is a former pastor of the Orchard Ridge UCC, Madison, WI, and professor of applied behavioral science at Eden Theological Seminary, Webster Groves, MO. He belongs to the Seneca tribe.

## UPCOMING EVENT

"People Supporting People" will be the focus of an international resource center conference at the Town and Country Convention Center, San Diego, CA, Jan. 27-29.

Keynote speaker Charles Cappleman, CA, vice president operations, Television City, CBS will discuss "Communication Opportunities in a Changing Environment."

Workshop topics include computers, video, promotion, resourcing issues, consultative skills and utilizing volunteers.

The conference is sponsored by UCC, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and United Methodist Church.

Registration, which includes three meals, is \$90. Rooms are available for \$38 for singles, \$68 for doubles.

Write Betty J. Dencler and Associates, 1039 Louise Lane, Allentown, PA 18103, 215-820-4062.

## Penn Central Selects Weible for New Leader

Lyle J. Weible is Penn Central's new Conference President. Outgoing President Horace S. Sills will remain as consultant until Dec. 31.



Lyle J. Weible

Dr. Weible says his primary goal will be communicating "the good news of the gospel." "Classically speaking, the conference president is in the tradition of a bishop, meaning a protector of the faith," Dr. Weible said. "On the other hand, the conference president has a responsibility to not simply protect traditions, but to lead into new dimensions of faith and witness. One of the chief functions of the conference president must be that of a communicator."

Dr. Weible, former chaplain at Hoffman Homes for Youth in Gettysburg, PA, has pastored in Jackson, MI and Mont Vernon, NH.

## Black Colleges Give Education, Support

Providing quality education with individual attention is what Black colleges do best, said speakers at a recent black college conference at Riverside Church, NYC.

About 500 people attended the event sponsored by UCC, Disciples of Christ and five other denominations to honor historically Black colleges.

"Black colleges provide a supportive community in addition to a quality education. That's the history, that's the heritage of these institutions," said President John Taylor King of Austin, TX's Huston-Tillotson College, a 1952 merger of UCC and United Methodist-founded schools. Black colleges' ability to instill in students the confidence and pride necessary for success is demonstrated by the large number of successful Blacks who are graduates of these institu-

## JOB OPPORTUNITIES

UCC President's Office seeks an Executive Associate to be the president's principal representative. Requirements: ordination, proven administrative ability, a comprehensive knowledge of the church and skills for policy development. Candidates must be self-starters, able to direct and work with a wide spectrum of laity and clergy. Affirmative action employer. Apply in writing by Dec. 15 to Dr. Avery D. Post, 105 Madison Ave., NY, NY 10016.

UC Board for Homeland Ministries seeks a Secretary for Church Development. Candidates should be ordained and have local church and church development experience. The Secretary screens potential pastors, provides training, evaluates progress and helps renew selected older churches. Submit applications by Nov. 15 to the Rev. Robert L. Burt, UCBHM, Division of Evangelism and Church Extension, 132 W 31 St., NY, NY 10001.

tions, he said.

Still, many Black institutions experienced a decline in enrollment toward the end of the 1960's with the onset of integration and financial assistance programs for minorities. This, some school officials say, caused many of the better students to choose colleges traditionally closed to them over Black schools. However, the tide is beginning to turn.

"I think we're going to see a trend toward better students turning back to Black colleges because of the more practical education we offer," said Vernese O'Neal, director of admissions at UCC-affiliate Dillard University, New Orleans. Ms. O'Neal predicts Black colleges will increasingly boost programs aimed at better student without neglecting remedial needs of others.



Jane Flemming

An appearance by the Respect Yourself Youth Choir highlighted the recent Black College Celebration at NYC's Riverside Church. The event honored historically black schools. (See above story.)

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